



A Note to Instructors

It was the summer of 2017 when I first heard the story of Jordy Curtis, a high school student from Tolono, Illinois, who was driving home during a summer storm when fierce winds blew power lines down onto her car. Luckily, Jordy survived the scary ordeal, but thanks to her bravery and willingness to share her story, we found that there was a real opportunity to educate young drivers on what to do when a vehicle comes into contact with power lines.

While the specific events that led to Jordy's crash are rare, the Illinois Department of Transportation estimates that Illinois motorists strike power poles approximately 3,000 times a year. We know this firsthand because our crews are called to the scene of these crashes to de-energize the power lines. But what's most alarming is the fact that most motorists don't know what to do in this scenario. It's a natural instinct to quickly exit a vehicle after any crash, but when power lines are involved, both the vehicle and ground can become energized. Therefore, it's safest to remain inside and call 911. Only when the power company arrives and certifies that the lines are de-energized is it safe to exit. And if the driver or passengers must exit due to smoke or fire, there is a very specific protocol to follow that involves jumping out with both feet together and either bunny hopping or shuffling to safety.

To instill these critical safety procedures in the minds of soon-to-be drivers, we have worked alongside Jordy to assemble a classroom learning module that contains a video, quiz, infographic and other materials for you to utilize in the classroom. As President and Chairman of Ameren Illinois, and a former educator, this project is incredibly important to me. With a workforce that drives upwards of 30 million miles each year across a 43,700-square-mile service territory, road safety is something we take very seriously. But even beyond my role as leader of a company, my own children drive and their kids will too someday. I want them – and every beginning driver – to grasp the importance of downed power line and vehicle safety. Knowing what to do can truly save lives.

You will find each of the module materials available for download on this webpage. We hope that they will make a positive impact in the classroom. Thank you for all that you do.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard J. Mark". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Richard J. Mark

President and Chairman, Ameren Illinois